

DELLA RAINEY

1900--1986

When we interviewed two of Della Rainey's daughters, Barbara Runyan and Col. June Rainey, it was a delightful time of learning about family rivalry, fun, and lots and lots of hard work. They are an enviable family--close knit, talented and very supportive of one another. They have always been a positive influence in the community. You could depend on them and know you would be treated fairly.

Della, (Sweeney), a homemaker, and her husband, Paul, were typical of that era. Raising seven children, they worked hard from early morning 'til nightfall. First they lived in Oak Park, eventually moving to Prune Hill on 88 acres. They had a large garden, canning all their own fruits and vegetables. There were cows to milk, and milk to deliver. Paul also worked 10-hour shifts in the Crown Zellerbach Shipping Department for 17 cents an hour. The children were expected to do their part, and everyone had a job to do.

Della was a remarkably capable woman, and left her "mark" in the community in an unusual way. For \$10 a month, she was responsible for the daily cleaning and lighting of the glass lantern which she put out as a beacon near the Parker House to warn boats sailing on the Columbia River. Somehow, Della did find time to knit, crochet and play cards. She had a beautiful Hydrangea bush in the yard that everyone admired.

Della's grandfather was the Sheriff of Stevenson where the family homesteaded. Her great-great uncle, who was a glass blower, made a 225# five foot tall crystal vase that was used for a reception at the White House, and is now in a British museum.

Family values of hard work, honesty, and trustworthiness in business continued. Barbara and her husband, Paul, who owned Runyan's Jewelry Store, were chosen Business People of the Year in 1997. The Camas store has been in the family for 3 generations, first with Paul's parents, Emerson and Lola Runyan, and presently with granddaughter, Debbie Runyan Parker. Over the years, other family members have been employed there.

June's accomplishments are varied and impressive. She was the first woman in the paper mill to be given a man's job--hence more pay. She attended Hunter College, and later the University of Washington, served as Chief Petty Officer in the Coast Guard, and was an honor Guard at the San Francisco Opera House where the United Nations was formed. She retired after a military career in the Air Force as a Colonel, after 33 years.

Even though Della's children, grandchildren and great grandchildren's lives are varied and diverse, the common thread is that they have been successful, responsible and productive, while staying close and supportive of one another.